

PRINCIPLE

Christian Religion

taught to the Capacity of
the Meanest.

By T. G. Minister of the Gospel.

John 17. 3.

That they might know thee the only true God,
whom thou hast sent.

LONDON,

Printed for John Wright at the Globe in
Little-Brittain. 1668.



THE
PRINCIPLES
OF
Christian Religion
EXPLAINED.

Quest. **W**Ho is the Maker of all things?
Answ. God. Gen. 1. 1. Col. 1. 16.
By him were all things Created that
are in Heaven, and that are in Earth.

Q. What is God?

A. God is a Spirit of infinite perfection.

God is said to be a Spirit. 1. *Negatively*, to intimate that he is not a body or material substance. 2. *Analogically*, Spirits being the most perfect and excellent of all created beings are the fittest to represent the incomprehensible God to our narrow conceptions.

God is said to be a Spirit of perfection, or perfect spirit, thereby to exclude all manner of imperfections, and including all manner of perfections and excellencies.

In that he is a Spirit of infinite perfection, thereby is implied, that there is no measure or bounds set to his perfection. Whereby he is distinguished from the glorious Angels, and the souls of the Saints in Heaven, which though they are perfect spirits,

The Principles of

at their perfection is limited. Whereas Gods perfection is beyond all measure, being infinite.

Q. *How many Gods are there?*

A. There is one only God.

1 Cor. 8. 4. There is none other God but one.

Q. *How many Persons are there in the God-head?*

A. Three, the Father, the Son, and the holy Ghost.

Though there be but one God in substance, and essence, yet there be three distinct Persons subsisting in that one God-head. This appeareth from Christs own testimony in *Matth. 28. 19.* Where he gives commission to his Apostles to teach all Nations, and Baptize them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost. See likewise, *1 Joh. 5. 7.* That God should be one in essence and three in persons, is a Mysterie not to be comprehended, yet ought to be believed, being so plainly revealed in the Word.

Q. *How is God farther set forth unto us in his Word?*

A. 1. By his Properties. 2. By his Works.

The Properties of God are certain excellencies attributed to him: as when he is said to be Eternal, Almighty, Merciful, just, &c.

Q. *What are the kinds of Gods Properties?*

A. 1. Incommunicable. 2. Communicable.

Incommunicable properties are such excellencies, which are so proper to God alone, as in no respect they can be attributed or communicated to any other. As *Eternity*, without beginning: *Immutability*, not subject to any change: *All-sufficient*, not only for himself, but for all others: *Omnipotency*, able to do all things: *ubiquity*, to be everywhere present. These and such like are excellencies proper only to God, and cannot be communicated to the Creature.

Communicable Properties are certain excellencies in God, communicated also to creatures, as *Power*, *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Justice*, &c. Thus *Sampson* was a strong man, *Solomon* a wise man

Christian Religion, Explained.

man, Noah a just man, &c. But yet there is a great difference between these communicable properties, as they are in God, and as they are in the creature.

1. They are in God Originally, he is the primary fountain of them all, who hath what he hath in and from himself. Thus all these Properties in God are his very Essence.

2. They are all in God infinitely, without any limits or bounds. He is infinite in power, wisdom, holiness, justice, &c. But in the Creature they are,

1. By participation, they receive all their excellencies from God. *What hast thou that thou didst not receive?* 1 Cor. 4. 7.

2. By Measure. The Creature that hath the most, and best excellencies, hath but a stinted measure. *Eph. 4. 7.*

Q. To what heads may the works of God be brought?

A. Creation and Providence.

Q. What is meant by Gods creating things?

A. A making them out of nothing.

To create is to give a being to things that never were, and that out of nothing. In this respect it is said, *Gen. 1. 1. In the beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth,* that is, when there was nothing at all, no not any matter out of which things might be made, then God Created all things. Which kind of making things out of nothing, is proper to God. Thereby the Lord sheweth himself to be the true God.

Q. What things did God so make?

A. All things.

This the Apostle expressly avoucheth, *Col. 1. 16. By him were all things Created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible.* If the excellency of many Creatures, the greatness of others, the multitude of all together, be duly considered, it must needs be granted, that herein the Lord sheweth himself to be a God indeed: the only true God. None else can do the like.

The principles of

Q. *By what did God make all things ?*

A. By his Word.

Gen. 1. 3, 6. God said, let there be light, and let there be a Firmament, and it was so. And Psal. 33. 6. By the word of the Lord were things made. By Gods Word we understand the manifestation of his will. For God is said to speak not properly, but after the manner of man. Men use most commonly to express their mind and will by speaking. When God did manifest and declare his will, that such and such things should be, instantly they were : and they were so as God would have them.

Q. *What was that estate wherein God made all things ?*

A. Very good.

The holy Ghost expressly noteth, that at the end of every day, God took a thorow view of the particular works which he had made, and found them to be good, Gen. 1. 4, 10, &c. This is to be noted to justifie God against all the evil that is in the World. Many Creatures are now evil. But as God made them, they were not so. All evil hath risen from the creatures.

Q. *Wherein consisteth the Providence of God ?*

A. 1. In preserving Creatures. 2. In well ordering them.

For the preserving of Creatures, if God did not sustain, and maintain them, they would soon come to nought. In this respect it is said, *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, Act. 17. 28.

Q. *What doth God by his providence order ?*

A. All things whatsoever. Psal. 113. 6.

The providence of God extends as far as his Creation : as all things were Created by God ; so all things are ordered by him. As the high and great things in the highest Heaven. So the greatest things on earth, (Dan. 2. 21. *He removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings*) Yea, and the meanest things also, as the very colours, Mat. 5, 36.

Q. *What*

Christian Religion, Explained.

Q. *What is that end whereunto God directeth things?*

A. 1. His own Glory. 2. His Childrens good.

Gods glory is the most principal and supream end of all. At that he aimed in giving the first being to his creatures. And at that he aimeth in all things that are done at any time in any place.

Yea also, as at the next subordinate end, he aimeth at Childrens good. In regard whereof, *all things work together for their good*, Rom. 8. 28.

Q. *In what estate did God make man at first?*

A. In a very good and happy estate.

Gen. 1. 31. It is said, *After God had made man, he overlooked every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.*

Q. *Wherein did mans happiness especially consist, which he was at first made?*

A. In that he was made after the image of God, which consisted in perfect knowledge, true holiness, and righteousness, Gen. 1. 26, 27. Col. 3. 10.

Man at first had knowledge of all things necessary for the glory of God, and his own good; and was likewise made holy and righteous, and without sin.

Q. *Did man alwayes continue in that holy and happy estate.*

A. No: he fell from it by transgressing that commandment of God, in eating the forbidden fruit Gen. 3. 3, &c.

The sin especially lay in disobeying the command of God, which commandment he gave him for the tryal of his obedience. Many may possibly think this sin a light matter, and are apt to charge God with severity for punishing man so sore for so small an offence. But if they shall consider the manifold sins infolded in that transgression, they must acknowledge it a very hainous sin, For

1. There was *infidelity* therein, in that they believed not

The Principles of

Gods word. For though God had said, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely dye*, Gen. 2. 17. yet they believed not that they should dye, but made some question and doubt thereof.

2. *Sottish credulity*, in giving credit to the Devil: God had said, *ye shall surely dye*. And the Devil said, *ye shall not surely dye*.

3. Yet the Woman, and so also the Man thorow her perswasion, gave more credit to the Devil, the Father of lyes, than to God the father of truth.

4. *Horrible Idolatry* in doting upon, and loving the creature more than God the Creator, who is blessed for ever. For this is the way of committing idolatry, namely by Deifying the Creature, and loving it more than God.

5. *Pride and Ambition*, desiring to be as Gods. For when the Devil said, *ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil*, they were puffed up therewith, that they transgressed.

6. *Theft*. For they took that which was none of their own, but by a special reservation kept from them. For God had expressly forbidden them to eat of that tree, Gen. 2. 17.

7. *Murther*. Our first Parents by eating that forbidden fruit, brought death, not only upon themselves, but upon all their posterity. Yea, as much as in them lay, they thereby implunged themselves and all their posterity into hell fire. By these you may judge of the greatness of the sin of our first parents.

Q. *Is Adams posterity guilty of that sin?*

A. *Yea, Adams sin is imputed to all his posterity.*

By one mans disobedience many were made sinners, Rom. 5. 19. that is, by the transgression of Adam, the first man, many, even those that have or shall come from him, are justly accounted sinners.

Q. *How can Adams posterity be guilty of his sin?*

A. 1. *Adam was a publick person in that business.*

He stood not in his own room alone, but in the room of all mankind. He was the great representative of the world, so that in sinning, we sinned in and with him.

2. *We were all in the loins of Adam when he sinned.* And so by the Law of generation sinned in him, and in him deserved eternal condemnation.

Q. *what*

Q. What is sin in general ?

A. Sin is a transgression of the Law.

Thus doth an Apostle expressly define it, 1 *Joh. 3. 4.* The law is a manifestation of the will of God, declaring what he would have man to do, or not to do : therefore to transgress the law, is to offend God, and to sin against his express will.

Q. What are the kinds of sin ?

A. Original and Actual.

Q. What is Original sin ?

A. That corruption of nature wherein all are conceived, and born.

It is the immediate effect of *Adams* first sin, and the principal cause of all other sins. In which respect it is called *Original*, because it is the spring from whence all actual sins issue and flow. Of this Original corruption did *David* speak in *Psal. 51. 5.* *Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my Mother conceive me.* Never was any that came from *Adam* (Christ only excepted, who was conceived by the holy Ghost) free from this sin. As every other creature receiveth the nature and disposition of their kind, and stock ; thus Lyons a ravenous disposition, Doggs a doggish disposition : so the Children of sinfull man a sinfull disposition, an inclination rooted in their natures to all kinds of sin : which continueth in them as long as they live, and is never quite rooted out of any, so long as he continueth here on earth. Which the Lord in his wisdom hath so ordered,

1. That thereby they may be the more humbled, and kept from spiritual pride.

2. That they might have more frequent occasions of going to God by prayer for help and strength against the working of corruptions in them.

Q. What is actual sin ?

A. A particular breach of Gods Law.

Q. How many wayes do men fall into actual sins ?

A. 1. By omitting or not doing the good which God in his Word requireth.

2. By

2. By committing or doing the evil which God in his Word hath forbidden.

3. By a sinfull manner of performing that which is good.

The best duties we take in hand are exceedingly corrupted through our failing in the manner of performing them.

Q. What is the punishment of sin?

A. All curses and plagues in this life, at the end death, and after that, eternal torment in hell, Deut. 28. 16, 17. Rom. 6. 23. 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9.

*Q. Is any man able to free himself out of that wo-
full plight whereinto he hath implunged himself
by sin?*

A. Surely No.

2 Cor. 3. 5. *We are not sufficient of our selves to think any
thing as of our selves.* Much less can we do any thing of our
selves, to free our selves from so great a misery, as sin hath
brought us into. *We are dead in sin,* Eph. 2. 1. And dead men
cannot raise themselves to life.

Q. Can any other creature deliver man?

A. No meer Creature.

Psalms 49. 7. *None of them can by any means redeem his bro-
ther, nor give unto God a ransom for him.* This may be ap-
plied to all the Creatures in the World, to all the Saints and
Angels in the World, none of them can by any means re-
deem his brother. So that in regard of mans own power, or
in regard of succour from any meer creature, there remaineth
nothing but matter of despair.

*Q. Is there any means to free man out of his cor-
rupt and miserable estate?*

A. Yes, God himself hath given unto man a
Saviour.

Act. 5. 31. When it was manifested none could help, God
himself gave an helper, and a Saviour unto us.

Q. Wh

Q. Who is mans Saviour?

A. Jesus Christ.

1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.*

Jesus, is an Hebrew word, and signifieth a Saviour. The Angel that gave this name, addeth this reason thereof, *He shall save his people from their sins,*

The other name, *Christ*, is a Greek Word, and signifieth *anointed*, *Jesus* shews him to be a Saviour. *Christ* an able Saviour, because anointed, that is, set apart by God and endowed with all fulness for the work of our redemption.

Q. What is Jesus Christ.

A. He is the eternal Son of God, who in the fulness of time took mans nature.

The only begotten Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, who in the fulness of time took mans Nature upon him; This is Jesus Christ. He is called the *only begotten Son of God*, because he is the alone Son of God by nature. For though others be Sons of God by Creation, as *Adam* was, and the *Angels*. Others by adoption, and regeneration, as the Saints of God. Yet none is his Son by nature, but Jesus Christ, who is therefore called, the *only begotten Son of God*, Joh. 1. 14. which is to be understood of an eternal, and incomprehensible generation, which would rather be admired than enquired into.

Q. Why must mans Redeemer be man?

A. 1. In general that he might suffer and dye for mans Redemption.

Heb. 9. 22. *Without shedding of blood is no remission of sin.* Christ therefore that he might dye for our Redemption, took upon him our Nature, for as God he could not dye.

2. That he might satisfie the justice of God in the same manner wherein it was offended.

For the justice of God did require, that satisfaction should be made in the same nature which had sinned. Man therefore having sinned, it was requisite that man should dye, for the satisfying Gods justice, and appeasing his wrath. Whereupon saith

faith the Apostle, *Since by man came Death, by man came the Resurrection of the dead,* 1 Cor. 15. 21.

3. That he might feel our frailties, and from sense and experience learn pity and compassion.

Which reason the Apostle rendreth, Heb. 2. 16, 17. *He took on him the seed of Abraham, that he might be a merciful, and faithfull High-Priest, that is, that he might be merciful, as one man is to another. And in Heb. 4. 15. we have not an High-Priest, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

Q. *Why must mans Redeemer be also God?*

A. 1. That he might be able and sufficient to endure that which for mans sin he undertook.

The burden which he underwent, was the wrath of an infinite God, and there was need of a divine power to support under the divine wrath. His humane nature would have been overwhelmed with the heavy weight of Gods wrath, had not the divine nature strengthened and upheld it.

2. That he might vanquish all the enemies of our Salvation, and overcome Satan, hell and death, which no meer creature could do.

Christ being God, by his death he overcame death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.

3. That his obedience and sufferings might be of an infinite price and value.

That which made the Obedience, and the Death of Christ to be of such an infinite value was, that it was the obedience, and the death of the Son of God, of him who was God, as well as man. The Deity being one nature in the person of our Redeemer, an infinite dignity accompanied his person, and every thing that was done and suffered by him.

Which affords a singular ground of comfort to all humbled sinners, sensible of their sins, and misery, due unto them for the same; in that the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ is of infinite worth and merit, far above the merit of their sins; being the death and sufferings of him who was God as well as man.

Oh what comfort, yea what matter of triumph did this afford unto the Apostle *Paul*, as appeareth in *Rom. 8. 33. 34.* For treating of the fulness and alſufficiency of Christs ſatisfaction by his death, in the former part of the Chapter; in the latter part, he ſpeaks as one raviſhed with abundance of comfort, and thereupon preſently challengeth a diſpute with any, concerning the fulness of Christs ſatisfaction by his death. Let conſcience, ſaith he, and carnal reaſon, let Law and ſin, Hell and Devil bring in all their ſtrength, object what they can, either the juſtice of God, or the number and hainouſneſs of my ſins, what are all theſe? *Seeing Chriſt hath dyed, who is he, ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? whom ſhall condemn? It is Chriſt that dyed.* As if he had ſaid, ſeeing Chriſt, the beloved Son of God, hath offered up his life as a Sacrifice, and ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God for my ſins, I will not fear the accusations of Satan, nor the objections of mine own carnal heart.

Q. What hath Chriſt done for our Redemption?

A. 1. He performed that obedience which we did owe to the Commandments of God.

2. He ſuffered that puniſhment which was due unto us for our ſins.

The former is called Christs *active obedience*, the latter his *paſſive obedience*.

Christs active obedience was moſt abſolute, and perfect: for he perfectly performed whatſoever the Law of God did require, which himſelf intimateth in that ſpeech of his to *John Baptiſt* (*Matth. 4. 15.*) *It becometh us to fulfill all Rightconſeſs.* And as we were made unrighteous by the firſt *Adams* diſobedience. So are we made righteous by the obedience of the ſecond *Adam* Chriſt *Jeſus*. This the Apoſtle expreſſly notheth, *Rom. 5. 19.* *By one mans diſobedience, meaning, Adams, many were made ſinners. So by the obedience of one, namely Chriſt, ſhall many be made righteous, that is, all who belong unto him. And as Chriſt ſubjected himſelf unto the Law, and fulfilled the ſame for us, in our ſtead whereby he purchaſed eternal life and ſalvation for us: So likewise he ſuffered that puniſhment which was due to us for our ſins, and thereby redeemed us from death and hell. For the Prophet *Iſay* ſpeaketh (*Iſa. 53. 6.*) *The Lord laid upon him**

the iniquity of us all, that is, the punishment due to all our iniquities. And verse 4. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows. The sorrow and anguish that was due to us for our sins, he hath born it all, and every jot of it. And so having made full satisfaction to the justice of God for us, we are discharged. Therefore saith the Apostle (Eph. 1. 7.) we have redemption through his blood, that is, through the bloody death and passion of Jesus Christ, we are redeemed from all our sins. But yet this is not so to be understood, as if we were redeemed from the curse by Christs passive obedience, and had the inheritance of glory purchased for us by his active obedience, separately considered; but by his active and passive obedience joyntly considered, we are both redeemed from the curse, and entitled to glory.

Q. What offices did Christ undertake to make us partakers of the benefit of that which Christ did and suffered?

A. Christ undertook three Offices, he became a (a) King, a (b) Prophet; and a (c) Priest. (a) Act. 5. 31. (b) Deut. 18. 18. (c) Psal. 110. 4.

Q. What are the parts of Christs Kingly Office?

A. 1. To govern his Church.

Christs governing his Church is partly *External*, and partly *Internal*.

1. *External* by his Word, wherein his Laws are revealed. And by his Officers, and Ministers, which he hath appointed to stand in his room; to whom he hath committed not only the word of reconciliation, but also the power of the *Keyes*, or power to put his Laws and Orders in execution.

2. Christ doth *Internally* govern his Church by his Spirit, whereby he so powerfully works upon them that he makes them willingly to submit to him.

Q. What other part is there of Christs Kingly Office?

A. 2. To provide for his Church.

Christs providing for his Church extends to all things need-
full

all for soul and body, even to all *spiritual*, and *temporal* blessings. He provides *spiritual* blessings for the souls of his members, by furnishing them with all needfull saving graces. He likewise provides *temporal* blessings for their bodies, so far as he seeth to be good for them. *The young Lyons do lack and suffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord shall not want any good thing*, Psal. 34. 10.

Q. What other part is there of Christs Kingly Office?

A. 3. To protect his Church.

Christ protects his Church and Members from all enemies. Her enemies are *Visible* and *Invisible*. Her *Visible* Enemies are all manner of wicked men. Her *Invisible* enemies are the Devil and his Angels. Christ either keepeth these enemies from assaulting his Church, as *Gen. 35. 5.* or weakneth their power, and restraineth it, as *2 Sam. 3. 1.* Or delivereth his out of their clutches, as *Exod. 14. 39.* Or destroyeth their enemies, as *2 King. 19. 35.*

Q. What is the chief work of Christs Prophetical Office?

A. To teach and instruct his Church.

Q. How doth Christ instruct his Church?

A. 1. Outwardly by his Word,

2. Inwardly by his Spirit.

First, Christ instructs his Church outwardly by making known his Fathers will, which he did by his own mouth, when he lived upon the earth. And by his Ministers, after his Ascension into Heaven, by their writings and Preaching.

Obj. Some may Object and say, Gods will was made known before Christ was born.

Ans. 1. It was indeed made known, but not so clearly, nor so fully as by Christ. It was obscured by Types.

2. It was not then made known altogether without Christ. For though Christ of old did not so visibly shew himself a revealer of his Fathers will, as after he was born and lived on Earth: yet did he reveal Gods will to the Children of men in those dayes. For wheresoever God is said to speak, the Son of God,

God, the second person in the Trinity, is there meant. when God is said in any visible shape to appear to men, same person, the Son of God appeared, Yea, that which Angels or Prophets made known to men, was first made known to them by the Son of God, *Act. 7. 38.* In this respect among others, Christ is often called the **WORD**, as *Jas. 1. 1, &c.* For as men by word of mouth ordinarily declare their mind and meaning : So did God declare his will, and mind by his Son.

2. Christ instructs his Church *inwardly*, by causing his Spirit to work with the outward Ministry, which he hath ordained, upon the souls of men. Christ speaketh now in Ministers, as he did in *Paul*, (*2 Cor. 13. 3.*) though not in the same measure, yet in the same manner. Thus in and by these Ordinances which he hath prescribed to his Church, he enlighteneth the mind, mollifieth the heart, comforteth the Conscience, yea and worketh faith, hope, love, patience, new-obedience, and all other needfull graces.

Q. What are the parts of Christs Priestly Office ?

A. 1. Satisfaction. 2. Intercession.

These two were the principal works of the *High-Priest* under the Law. One he did by offering Sacrifice. The other by entering into the most holy-place with Incense. Both these are joyned together, and applied to Christ, *Rom. 8. 34.* *Who is it that condemneth ? It is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* Here we have both *Satisfaction*, and *Intercession* applied to Christ. Satisfaction by his death, and Intercession now that he is risen again, and sitteth at the right hand of God.

Christs Sacrifice on the Cross was of such efficacy, that Gods Justice was thereby abundantly satisfied, his wrath fully pacified, yea his face and favour, and all blessings following thereon was purchased. The death of Christ is therefore said to be a Sacrifice to God, a sweet smelling savour, *Eph. 5. 2.* And the Church is said to be purchased thereby, *Act. 20. 28.* namely from all that bondage under which it was, as sin, the curse of the Law, the Wrath of God, Death, Devil, Damnation.

After Christ had offered up his Life a Sacrifice unto God, and thereby made satisfaction for the sins of his Church; he was buried, and laid in the grave, to sanctifie the grave to all his members. And the third day he arose from the dead. As he himself laid down his life, so he himself took it up again. And then he ascended into Heaven, there to make intercession for us, which is the second part of his Priestly Office. The former was to make satisfaction: this latter to make intercession.

Christ may be said to make intercession for us two wayes,

1. By a continual presenting of himself to his Father for us. Christ, saith the Apostle, Heb. 9. 24. *is entred into Heaven, now to appear in the presence of God for us.* Christ presents himself our Sacrifice, and propitiation for our sins, whose very blood becomes our Advocate, to plead with the Father for us, Heb. 12. 24.

2. By manifesting his will to have all his made partakers of the vertue and benefit of his Sacrifice. Joh. 17. 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.*

The word *Intercession* properly signifieth supplication for another. It is attributed to Christ especially as he is now in Heaven, by way of resemblance. The resemblance may be taken from the Favourite of a King, who is alwayes at Court, in the Kings presence, and there presents his friends petition, and intercedes for the granting thereof. Christ, the great favourite of the Lord, stands before him continually to present our supplications, and procure our acceptance.

Q. How comes Christ, and those things which he did and suffered in his own person to be ours?

A. By Faith.

Rom. 3. 22. Faith is called the faith of Jesus, because we hereby relying on Christ, are united to him, and so have a right to all that is his. In this respect whatsoever we receive from Christ, is attributed to faith. By faith we are justified, Rom. 3. 28. *We are saved by faith*, Eph. 2. 8. *By faith we have access to God*, Rom. 5. 2. In a word, As they, who in the dayes whilest Christ lived upon the earth, received cure of any malady from him, received it by faith. So every

good thing that now we receive from Christ, we receive by faith. How needfull then is it, that we be well instructed in the nature of faith.

Q *What is faith?*

A. True saving faith is a grace wrought in us by the Spirit of God, through the Ministry of the Word, whereby we receive Christ, as he is offered in the Gospel, and rest upon him alone for life and salvation.

First, I say, *True saving faith is a grace.* It is not the work of nature; it being as impossible for a man by his own strength to believe, as it is to keep the Law. Faith therefore in Scripture is called, *the gift of God.*

It is added, *wrought in us by the spirit of God,* by whose efficacy (as the principal cause) it is begotten in us.

Through the Ministry of the word, because that is the ordinary means whereby the Spirit of God doth work faith in our hearts. Its true, that the reading of the Scriptures, and of good books, may through Gods blessing be a means of working faith; but it is most sure and certain, that the most ordinary means is the Word preached, as Rom. 10. 17. *Faith cometh by hearing,* viz. the Word of God.

For first, the Law discovereth unto us our sins and miserable condition by reason of them: That we are utterly lost in our selves, having deserved, and are lyable to all judgements and plagues here, and eternal death and condemnation hereafter: and that we are altogether unable to free our selves out of this miserable condition, whereunto we have plunged our selves by sin.

And then the Gospel shews us, that in the fulness of time, Jesus Christ who was the Eternal Son of God, came into the World, took our nature upon him, and therein became our Surety; and as our Surety, hath taken our debts upon him, and by his obedience, and al sufficient Sacrifice of his own body, once offered upon the Cross, hath made full satisfaction in Gods justice for the same.

Yea, the Gospel farther sheweth, that God, in him, offered

grace and reconciliation, pardon of sins here, and eternal salvation hereafter, to all that believe in him.

The which truth being revealed to us by the Preaching of the Word; the Spirit of God inwardly worketh in us effectual assent thereunto, upon which followeth an high prizing of Jesus Christ above all things, an hungry and thirsting after him, and a resolution of heart to receive him as our all-sufficient Saviour, and to rest upon him, and his merits alone for life and salvation.

And therefore it is added in the forementioned description, that faith is a grace *whereby we receive Christ*. And indeed thereby is Christ made ours. For what is more our own, than that which is freely offered us, and we have received. To receive Jesus Christ, is the same as to lay hold on him, or to embrace him, and apply him to our selves. But I have the rather made choice of this word *receive*, because it is the very expression of the holy Ghost, Joh. 1. 12. *As many as received him to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe.* This latter clause, *to them that believe*, is added as an exp'ation of the former clause, *As many as received him*; shewing what is meant by *receiving Christ*, namely a believing on him. Which two are very fitly joyned together. Believing is added to *receiving*, to shew what is meant by *receiving Christ*. And *receiving* is added to *believing*, to shew what kind of faith it is, whereby Christ becomes ours, it is such a faith, whereby we accept of and receive Christ with the benefits of his death and passion.

It follows in the description of faith, How Christ must be received, namely, *as he is offered in the Gospel*.

Christ is offered in the Gospel *In all his Offices*, as Priest, Prophet, and King. And so he must be received, not only as our Priest, who hath made satisfaction for us, by his death upon the Cross, and now in Heaven maketh intercession for us. But likewise as our Prophet, to be taught and instructed by him, and as our King, to be ruled and governed by him: and we must as willingly cast our selves at the feet of Christ in subjection to him, as into the arms of Christ for salvation from him? we must be as willing to serve Jesus Christ, as to be saved by him. The purpose of God in freeing us from

the spiritual bondage, in which we were by nature, being this, *that we should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the dayes of our lives.*

Vainly therefore do they deceive themselves, who are willing to receive Christ as a Redeemer, but not as a Ruler: as a Saviour, but not as a Lord and King. Let such know, that Christ will be a Saviour to none, to whom he is not a Lord, and King. His subjects alone, and none other will he save, or he will not part his Offices.

In the last place is added, *And rest upon him alone, for the pardon of our sins here, and for eternal life and Salvation hereafter.* This resting on Christ we find is set forth in Scripture by sundry Phrases, as a *trusting in Christ*, Eph. 1. 12. And a *leaning on Christ*, Cant. 8. 5. *A staying our selves upon him*, Isa. 50. 10.

Q *What are those especial benefits which believers receive from Christ?*

A. 1. Justification. 2. Adoption. 3. Sanctification.

That justification is by faith, the Apostle concludeth, Rom. 8. 28. *we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law.*

Q *What is Justification?*

A. Justification is an act of Gods free grace, whereby he forgives us all our sins; and accepts of us as righteous, in and for the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to us.

That justification is an act of Gods free grace, The Apostle expresseth, Rom. 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace.* And that God accepts us as righteous in and for the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, is clear from Rom. 5. 19. *As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners; So by the Obedience, or righteousness, of one, namely Christ, shall many be made righteous: that is, perfectly righteous, so as God shall accept them for righteous.* We are justified not by any inherent righteousness of our own, which is imperfect; but by the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and by God himself accounted ours.

2 Cor. 5. 21. *He made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him* that is, in Christ. In which words is expressly noted, that we are so made righteous before God in Christ, as he was made sinner for us. Now how was Christ made a sinner for us. Namely, by imputation; according to that of the Prophet Isa. 53. 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all* God accounted our sins his, and accordingly he was punished as a sinner. And so he accounts his righteousness ours, and in that respect we are righteous before God. The Lord accounting us as righteous through Christs righteousness, as if we had kept the whole Law. Admirable is the comfort which a believers soul receiveth from this point of his justification before God. For so soon as he believeth, even while he liveth in this World, he is thus justified in Gods sight. Hereby therefore is he upheld against the afflicting sense of the imperfection of his own righteousness. For though his own righteousness be but as filthy rags, yet this is his comfort, that he is righteous in the sight and account of God, by the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to him.

Q. Which are the parts of Justification?

A. 1. Remission of all our sins.

2. Acceptation of us as righteous through the imputation of Christs Righteousness, Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8.

1. Our sins make us odious and abominable in the sight of God: yea they make us cursed, and lyable to eternal damnation: they therefore are first taken away: not that they are not, or that God seeth them not, but in that God imputeth them not to us, 2 Cor. 5. 19.

2. God to make us glorious in his sight, imputes his Sons righteousness unto us, and therein accepts us. In which respect we are said to be made righteous by Christs righteousness, Rom. 5. 19. and to be made accepted in the beloved, Eph. 1. 6.

By laying these two parts of our justification together, the transcendent love of Christ to believers is clearly set out. For,

1. That which is our own, namely our sins, because they make us miserable, he taketh from us, and layeth on himself, *He was made sin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

2. That which is none of our own, because without it we cannot be happy, he imputes to us, and accounts ours, and accepts of us, as if it were our own, namely, his own perfect righteousness. For saith the Apostle, *We are made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Q. What is Adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of Gods free-grace whereby of Children of Wrath, and of the Devil, we are made the Children of God, *Job. 1. 12.*

We are not only accounted Children, and taken into the number of the seed of God, but are invested with all the privileges of the Children of God, *Rom. 8. 17.*

Q. What is Sanctification?

A. Sanctification is a work of Gods Spirit, whereby a justified person is by degrees renewed throughout, according to the Image of God in holiness and righteousness.

First, Sanctification is said to be *a work of Gods Spirit*, because he is the principal author, and efficient cause thereof.

Whereby *a justified person is renewed*: I add *a justified person*, because Justification and Sanctification alwayes go together. Though Justification be before in Nature, yet are they both wrought at the same time. The Lord accounteth no man righteous, by imputing Christs righteousness unto him, but he makes him also righteous by a righteousness inherent in himself.

Is renewed; by the work of Sanctification a man is morally made a new man, and as it were, another man. *All things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. He hath new thoughts, new desires, new dispositions.

This renewing is *by degrees*; that is, by little and little, and not all at once. Indeed we are Justified at once, but we are
Sanctified

Sanctified by degrees. In which respect Sanctification is compared to the *light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18. And Eph. 4. 26. To the body of a man, which groweth and encreaseth in stature, and strength, till it be come to the perfection of it. Even so our Sanctification encreaseth by degrees; we go on from grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, till we be perfect men, of full growth in Christ Jesus.

This *renewing* as it is by degrees, so it is *throughout*, that is within and without, in all the faculties of the soul, and parts of the body. And that *according to the Image of God in holiness, and righteousness*. So that a Christian by the life of Sanctification lives like unto God: at least he hath an holy disposition and inclination; and heartily endeavours so to do, to be holy, as God is holy: and as the Apostle speaketh (Rom. 7. 22.) *He delighteth in the Law of God after the inward man.*

Q. What other Grace doth the Gospel require besides faith?

A. Repentance, Mat. 3. 2. and 4. 17.

Q. What is Repentance?

A. Repentance is such a change of the heart, as causeth a new Life.

Repentance chiefly consisteth in the change of the mind and heart of a man. As for the new life, it is an effect and evidence of the new heart. A new heart causeth a new life. The outward change and renovation of a mans life is necessary. For Repentance must be in the whole man; and this latter giveth evidence to the truth of the former. And where the former is, there the latter will also be: where there is a renewed heart, there will be a reformed life. For the soul hath an absolute command over the body: and the body is wholly governed by the soul.

Q. Whence ariseth Repentance?

A. 1. From a light and sense of sin, with sorrow for it.

2. From a faith of the pardon of sin,

The Principles of

1. By sight of sin is meant, both a general, and also a particular knowledge of sin.

First, A general knowledge of the nature of it, what it is; and of the loathsome properties of it, how ugly and odious it maketh us in the pure eyes of God; and of the fearful effects of it, which are all miseries in this life, a cursed death, and eternal damnation.

Secondly, A particular knowledge of our own sins. Not only of those sins which are common to the nature of all men, as Original corruption, proneness to evil, dulness to good, &c. But also of such particular Lusts as we feel warring in our members, and such actual sins, as we have committed in our lives. As he that said, *I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and an oppressor*, 1 Tim. 1. 13.

By sense of sin is meant a spiritual feeling of the wofull plight, and condition wherein we lye, by reason of sin. When inwardly in our souls and consciences we are touched, and wounded for our sins.

I I. Faith concerning the pardon of sin is that which most kindly and effectually bringeth a man to Repentance. The prementioned sight and sense of sin, and sorrow for sin, are excellent means to work in a man an hatred of sin, and to make him wish he had never committed it, yea and to make him think of turning from sin.

But faith in the pardon of sin, whereby the soul is persuaded that all sins past shall be fully forgiven to him that repenteth, and turneth from sin, is a strong Motive to draw him from his former wicked courses. And the Repentance that is by faith in Gods mercy wrought, is most kindly wrought. For faith as it apprehends pardon of sin most freely through Gods mercy in Christ Jesus; so it works repentance by way of gratitude, because it is pleasing and acceptable to God to turn from sin: and because the good God is displeased, and dishonoured by committing sin, and continuing therein.

Q What are the outward Means appointed by God, for the working, and strengthening of faith, repentance, and other graces in us.

A. The

A. The Ordinances of God, especially the Word, Sacraments and Prayer.

The Ministry of the Word is the most necessary, both for the working, and encreasing faith and other graces. That which the Apostle saith of faith, *That it cometh by hearing*, may be applied to all other graces, *They come by hearing the Word Preached*. And to shew that by it grace also is nourished, The Apostle Peter exhorteth, *To desire the sincere milk of the word; that they may grow thereby*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. How doth it then concern us, as to give diligent heed to the Ministry of the Word, So to mix faith with our hearing, as by giving credence to what is delivered out of the Word of God, so by applying to our selves those truths which the Word revealeth.

Q. What is a Sacrament?

A. An holy Ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein by outward signs, inward grace is signified and sealed.

So that there are three things necessary to the making up of a Sacrament.

1. An outward sign.
2. An inward or spiritual grace.
3. Christs Institution.

Q. How many Sacraments are there?

A. Two only; Baptism, and the Lords Supper.

As the Jews of old had two ordinary Sacraments, which were *Circumcision*, and the *Passover*. So Christians now have two such as answer to them; *Baptism* to *Circumcision*, Col. 3. 11, 12. The *Lords Supper* to the *Passover*, Luk. 22. 15, &c.

Q. What is Baptism?

A. A Sacrament wherein by the washing with water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, our Regeneration is signified and sealed.

In that Baptism is a Sacrament of our Regeneration, it sheweth,

- 1: That by nature we are born in a cursed condition, where we have therefore need to be new-born as soon as we are born. Re-
generation

Regeneration is so absolutely necessary to our Salvation, as without it we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Joh. 3. 3.*

2. That Baptism is a means of our Regeneration. Gods Spirit in and by that Ordinance worketh this great work. In which respect we are said to be *born of water and of the Spirit, Joh. 3. 5.* yet is not every one that is baptized really and inwardly regenerated. It is not the bare washing with water, but the working of the Spirit thereby, by which we are Regenerated. And the Spirit is a free agent, and worketh when and upon whom it listeth, *Joh. 3. 8.*

Q. What is the outward sign in Baptism?

A. Water, Añ. 8. 36.

There is nothing so fit to set out our cleansing from sin, as Water, whereby that which is filthy is clean.

Q. What is the inward thing signified by Water in Baptism?

A. The Blood of Christ.

In relation hereunto Christ is said to *have washed us from our sins in his blood, Rev. 1. 5.* As Water hath a cleansing vertue, so also hath Christs blood. *The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin, 1 Joh. 1. 7.*

Q. What is the Lords Supper?

A. A Sacrament of our spiritual nourishment, wherein by receiving Bread and Wine, according to Christs institution, our communion with Christ is represented, and sealed.

The Lords Supper is added to Baptism, as a needfull means to maintain that life of God which is begotten in us.

Q. What are the outward signs in the Lords Supper?

A. Bread and Wine, Mat. 26. 26.

Q. What doth the Sacramental bread set out?

A. The body of Christ.

This is evident by Christs own words, who holding bread in his hands, saith of it, *This is my body, (Matth. 26. 26.)* that

is, by way of representation, as if he had said, This bread representeth my body.

Q. What doth Sacramental Wine set out?

A. The blood of Christ.

This is evident by the words of institution, where Christ holding the Cup that had the Wine in it, and speaking of the Wine therein, he saith, *This is my blood*, Mat. 26. 27.

Q. What is signified by the Ministers breaking the bread?

A. That Christ was broken with torments for our sins.

The Apostle in 1 Cor. 11. 24. Thus bringeth in Christ himself applying that rite, *This is my body which is broken for you*.

Q. What is signified by powring out the Wine?

A. The shedding of Christs blood.

Or his suffering unto death, and powring forth his soul an offering for sin.

Q. What is signified by the Ministers giving Bread and Wine to the Communicants?

A. Gods giving and offering his Son to them.

In the Sacrament God doth offer and tender Christ to every Communicant: yea he doth, as it were, put him into our hands with his own hands.

Q. What is meant by those words of the Minister, Take, Eat, Drink?

A. Gods will for our applying Christ to our selves

He doth not only in a dumb shew make offer of Christ, but by his Minister speaks unto us, and saith, *I will and require you to take my Son, to apply him to your selves, that so you may live by him*. What can we more expect on Gods part to move us to receive his Son?

Q. What doth the peoples taking the Bread and Wine set out?

A. Their receiving Christs body and blood.

That is, a spiritual receiving of Christ made man, and made a Sacrifice

a Sacrifice, to themselves, and that by faith. For faith is that instrument whereby we receive Christ, and all his benefits as they are offered to us in the Gospel, and sealed unto us in the Sacrament. Faith is to the soul, as the hand is to the body. That which is offered to a man for his good, the hand receives to be his own. Thus God offering his Son unto us, faith first persuades the heart of Gods good will to man, and of his true intention to bestow Christ upon him, and thereupon applies and takes Christ to himself, as his own. By faith the things signified are as truly received for the nourishment of the soul, as the signs are received for the nourishment of the body. Faith is not only our hand to take hold of Christ: but our mouth to take him in, to take him down into our hearts, whereby he becomes our nourishment and strength.

Q. What is the duty of every Communicant before he goeth to the Lords Table?

A. Examination.

1 Cor. 11. 28. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that Cup.* Concerning this, see my Directions for the worthy receiving the Lords Supper, Chap. 24.

Q. What is Prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up our desires to God in the name of Christ, for such good things as he hath promised to give, and we stand in need to receive.

Prayer stands not in the bare use of a form of good words, but is the pouring forth the soul, and the desires thereof after God, and the good things he hath to bestow, Isa. 26. 9.

In the name of Christ. God heareth not sinners, that is, coming in their own name. But says Christ himself, Joh. 15. 16. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, [in my name] he will give it you. For such things as he hath promised to give, and we stand in need to receive.* Our prayers must be according to Gods Will. And this is according to the will of God, that we ask what he hath promised, and what he knows we have need of. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us, 1 Joh. 5. 14.

The Parts of Prayer are,

1. Confession,

1. Confession, or the acknowledgement of our sins and transgressions.
2. Petition, or the asking, or craving from the hands of God such things as we want.
3. Thanksgiving, or the praising of God for the mercies we have received.

Q What shall be the state of men after death ?

A. I. In general,

1. The bodies of all men shall be raised out of their graves, and shall live again, *1 Cor. 15.*
2. All men shall be brought to Judgement, *2 Cor. 5. 10.*

II. In particular,

1. Believers shall go into everlasting life.
2. Unbelievers and ungodly into everlasting fire, *Mat. 25. 34, 41.*

FINIS.